

IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) Apparatus ~~for removing bone~~, configured for entering the spine of a live human patient through separate first and second incisions, made in the patient adjacent to different vertebrae in the spine, to remove material from the spine, the apparatus comprising:  
a handle;  
[a] first and second elongate extensions, attached to said handle, long enough to extend, simultaneously, from the handle respectively through the first and second incisions to separate first and second locations along the length of the spine;  
~~a second extension attached to said handle; and~~  
a flexible rasp ~~adapted for passage through a spinal channel of a live human, extending between a tip of said first extension and a tip of said second extension~~ configured to pass along the first extension into the body through the first incision and up to the first location on the spine, through the spinal channel from the first location to the second location, and from the second location along the second extension out of the body through the second incision.
2. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]51, wherein said rasp moves axially between said tips.
3. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 2, comprising a take-up reel for advancing said rasp between said tips.
4. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]51, comprising a shield adjacent said rasp, to prevent contact of said rasp with tissue at at least some locations along said rasp.
5. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said rasp has two faces, and wherein said shield protects tissue from one face of said rasp.
6. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said rasp is positioned between said shield and said handle, such that said rasp has an at least partially unshielded active

face towards said handle.

7. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the relative positions of the rasp and shield with respect to said handle are changeable by rotation of at least one of the rasp and the shield around an axis connecting said tips.
8. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said rasp has two narrow sides and wherein said shield protects tissue from the sides of said rasp.
9. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said shield is fixed relative to said tips.
10. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said shield is adapted to move axially with said rasp.
11. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said shield comprises a smooth backing on said rasp.
12. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said shield comprises a channel within which said rasp is positioned.
13. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said shield cooperates with said rasp to accumulate tissue removed by said rasp between said rasp and said shield.
14. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising at least one resting point at at least one of said extensions, which resting point is adapted to engage a vertebra.
15. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, wherein said rasp has a transaxial width narrow enough to fit inside a vertebral channel of a adult human.
16. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, wherein said rasp is less than 7 mm wide in a transaxial direction.

17. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]16, wherein said rasp is less than 5 mm wide.
18. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]17, wherein said rasp is less than 3 mm wide.
19. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]18, wherein said rasp is less than 2 mm wide.
20. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]19, wherein said rasp is thinner than 1mm.
21. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]20, wherein said rasp is thinner than 0.5 mm.
22. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]21, wherein said rasp is thinner than 0.3 mm.
23. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]22, wherein said rasp is thinner than 0.1 mm.
24. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]51, wherein said rasp is adapted to remove vertebral bone.
25. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]51, wherein said rasp is adapted to remove calcifications.
26. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]51, wherein said rasp is adapted to remove ligament tissue.
27. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim [[1]]51, wherein said rasp is formed of

metal.

28. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, wherein said rasp is formed of a bioabsorbable material.
29. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of rasp elements are defined on said rasp.
30. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said elements are defined by etching.
31. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said elements are defined by punching.
32. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, wherein a plurality of rasp elements are attached to said rasp.
33. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said rasp comprises a cable.
34. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said rasp comprises a chain.
35. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said rasp elements are adapted to guide removed tissue away from the tissue on which the rasp is working.
36. (Withdrawn) Apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said rasp elements are adapted to retain removed tissue.
37. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising a source of cleaning fluid, adjacent said rasp.
38. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising a source of vacuum, adjacent said rasp.

39. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~51, wherein said rasp has a total length selected to be substantially sufficient for a spinal stenosis removal procedure.
40. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~51, wherein said rasp has a total length of between 0.5 and 4 meters.
41. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~40, wherein said rasp has a total length of between 1 and 3 meters.
42. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~51, wherein said rasp has an active length defined by a distance between said tips.
43. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 42, wherein said active length is adjustable by adjusting a distance between said tips.
44. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 42, wherein said active length is sufficient to span between one and ten vertebra of a adult human.
45. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 42, wherein said active length is sufficient to span between two and eight vertebra of a adult human.
46. (Previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 42, wherein said active length is sufficient to span between three and four vertebra of a adult human.
47. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~51, wherein said extensions are sufficiently long to extend from a body surface to a spinal channel of a adult human.
48. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~51, comprising a rasp advancer for advancing said rasp in a single direction.
49. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]~~51, comprising a rasp advancer for reciprocating said rasp.

50. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, wherein said apparatus comprises at least two parts, separable such that said first and said second extensions are in separate parts during a normal use of said apparatus.
51. (Currently amended) Apparatus ~~according to claim 1, comprising~~ for removing bone, comprising:  
\_\_\_\_\_ a handle;  
\_\_\_\_\_ a first extension attached to said handle;  
\_\_\_\_\_ a second extension attached to said handle;  
\_\_\_\_\_ a flexible rasp adapted for passage through a spinal channel of a live human, extending between a tip of said first extension and a tip of said second extension; and  
means for affixing said apparatus to a vertebra.
52. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising a spring for setting a tension in said rasp.
53. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising a spring for setting a surface pressure of said rasp against a working surface.
54. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising a gauge for measuring a tension in said rasp.
55. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim ~~[[1]]51~~, comprising a leader attached to one end of said rasp, which leader is adapted for inserting through a spinal channel.
56. (Original) Apparatus for spinal stenosis treatment, comprising:  
means for guiding a rasp through a part of a spinal channel defined by at least one vertebra;  
means for holding said rasp on either side of said part of a channel and outside a human or animal body including said vertebra; and  
means for moving said rasp to remove a spinal stenosis in said spinal channel.

57. (Withdrawn) A method of spinal stenosis treatment, comprising:  
inserting a flexible rasp into a spinal channel of a live human, such that the flexible rasp enters the spinal channel from a first point along the spinal channel and exits the spinal channel from a second point along the spinal channel; and  
moving the rasp in order to clear the spinal channel in at least one point along its length.
58. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 57, wherein the flexible rasp runs in parallel to the spinal channel over a length of at least one vertebra.
59. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 57, wherein the first and second points along the spinal channel are distanced by at least two vertebrae.
60. (Withdrawn) A method according to claim 57, wherein moving the flexible rasp comprises applying force to the rasp from sections of the rasp on opposite sides of the spinal channel.
61. (New) A method of treating spinal stenosis in a live human patient with a flexible rasp, the method comprising:  
making a first incision and a second incision in the body of the patient;  
contacting the spine through at least one of the incisions with a device for guiding the rasp;  
passing the rasp from outside the body, through the first incision to a first location on the spine;  
passing the rasp through the spinal channel from the first location to a second location on the spine;  
passing the rasp out of the spine at the second location, and out of the body through the second incision; and  
moving the rasp in order to remove tissue from the spinal channel;  
wherein at least part of passing the rasp is guided by the rasp guiding device.
62. (New) A method according to claim 61, wherein passing the rasp through the spinal channel comprises passing the rasp along the spinal channel over a length of at least one vertebra.
63. (New) A method according to claim 62, wherein the first and second locations on the spine

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are distanced by at least two vertebrae.